



GenAI in NCEA assessment: FAQs

These Frequently Asked Questions are intended to support teachers and school leaders to address the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools in NCEA assessment.

Question	Response
School Strategy and Policy	
1. Do schools need to have their own specific AI policy?	Yes. Schools with consent to assess listed standards are required to have an authenticity policy to support assessment practice. This policy must include the acceptable use of AI. School policy should help students, teachers and the school community understand the parameters for GenAI use in learning and assessment.
2. Where can I find NZQA or MOE policy on AI use in assessment?	MOE and NZQA both provide guidance. Schools must ensure they develop their own appropriate assessment policy. NZQA guidance on acceptable use of AI may help inform schools to develop their own policy: Guidance on the acceptable use of Artificial Intelligence – NCEA: https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ai-guidance/
3. What should schools include in their policy regarding GenAI usage?	Schools may consider how their assessment policy regarding authenticity of work and GenAI could include the following components: › Upholding academic integrity — it might be useful for schools to approach academic integrity holistically to demonstrate that academic integrity is academic, professional, and personal. › Preventing GenAI misconduct. › Detecting GenAI academic misconduct. › Processes around academic misconduct, including what happens when there is a suspected breach of authenticity. › Referencing protocols and formats for acknowledging GenAI use.
4. How might schools establish a school wide culture of academic integrity?	A school wide culture of academic integrity begins with explicitly connecting school assessment policy with school vision/values/ethos/kaupapa mission statements. A whole school approach can then follow involving modelling integrity in teacher behaviour as well as engaging the wider community with careful planning and strategy.

Question	Response
GenAI Use in NCEA Assessment	
5. Is it acceptable to use GenAI in external assessment?	Generative AI tools are not permitted to be used to complete any NCEA external assessments. You can see NZQA advice around this area at: Guidance on the acceptable use of Artificial Intelligence – NCEA: https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ai-guidance/
6. Where can I find information regarding appropriate use of GenAI in NCEA internal assessment?	For NCEA internal assessments, students must submit their own work for assessment. Teachers need to be aware of any specific requirements of the Achievement Standard being assessed and its Conditions of Assessment. Departments/faculties may have their own operational guidance to support students in submitting their own work, which must align with school assessment policy.
7. Can students use GenAI for feedback to guide their understanding of the assessment?	For NCEA internal assessments, teachers must be aware of any specific requirements of the Achievement Standard being assessed. Any use of GenAI tools must: comply with the Standard's Conditions of Assessment › ensure that students are not over-scaffolded or guided to the point that their work is not their own. Another way of thinking about a student's 'own work' is that it represents a level of understanding that the student has independently demonstrated and that they could repeat in a different context.
8. Is GenAI useful for 'getting started' with NCEA internal assessment?	It depends on the Achievement Standard being assessed. What might be appropriate to 'get started' on one Achievement Standard may not be appropriate for another. For example, GenAI can help with ideation and planning, but some internal Achievement Standards include assessment of student's ideation or planning. In those cases, using GenAI to ideate or plan would not be appropriate. Therefore, for NCEA internal assessments, teachers must be aware of any specific requirements of the Achievement Standard being assessed. Any use of GenAI tools must: › comply with the Standard's Conditions of Assessment › ensure that students are not over-scaffolded or guided to the point that their work is not their own.

Question	Response
9. Is GenAI use OK for gathering information for research assignments?	Similarly to 'getting started' on an assessment, it depends on what the Achievement Standard requires. If gathering information is part of what is assessed by the Achievement Standard, then using GenAI to gather information would not be appropriate. It is essential that for NCEA internal assessments, teachers are aware of any specific requirements of the Achievement Standard being assessed. Any use of GenAI tools must: › comply with the Standard's Conditions of Assessment › ensure that students are not over-scaffolded or guided to the point that their work is not their own. Whether GenAI may be considered a source of information, and how it should be acknowledged, should be described in the school's assessment policy. Using GenAI as a source without acknowledgement is plagiarism and a breach of authenticity; this is the same as for any source.
10. When is it appropriate to acknowledge GenAI use in NCEA internal assessment?	When GenAI has been used, regardless of how much or in what capacity, the GenAI tool used needs to be referenced like any other source of information. Using GenAI as a source without acknowledgement is plagiarism and a breach of authenticity; this is the same as for any source. Whether GenAI may be used as a source of information, and how it should be acknowledged, should be described in the school's assessment policy.
11. How might use of GenAI be acknowledged in NCEA internal assessment?	Students should follow school assessment policy and guidelines. Typically, these may include: 1. Mentioning the GenAI tool. 2. Explaining what the GenAI tool did/ was used for. 3. Providing a citation, e.g. OpenAI. (2025). ChatGPT (Version 4) [Large language model]. Retrieved from: https://www.openai.com/chatgpt 4. Checking and editing/reviewing the AI content. Highlight any AI generated content or modifications and also highlight any changes made. 5. Following school assessment policy and guidelines.

Question	Response
Assessment Design	
12. How can the design of an assessment activity limit the potential for misuse of GenAI?	Assessment activities that emphasise knowledge recall and involve a single submission without checkpoints, are more susceptible to GenAI misuse. Instead, monitored assessment or assessment over time, highly contextualised activities, and those requiring reference to personal experience or unique local/class content can limit the potential for GenAI misuse.
13. What is meant by ‘authentic assessment’ and how does it mitigate GenAI misuse?	‘Authentic’ usually means that a student’s work is their own. However, it can also refer to assessments that require students to apply their knowledge and skills to real, relevant scenarios or problems. Aside from often being more engaging, assessments like this are less susceptible to GenAI misuse. Assessments that draw on local or unique contexts further reduce the potential for AI to generate plausible content.
14. Does assessment format matter?	The format of an assessment activity can help teachers assure authenticity and encourage student engagement. Portfolio assessments or other formats that involve features such as process logs, reflection, or recorded interviews are less susceptible to GenAI misuse. Formats that require non-written elements such as oral presentations, videos, multimedia resources, or where students are required to incorporate personal reflections tied to unit concepts, are also less susceptible to GenAI misuse.
15. How does assessment that promotes critical thinking mitigate GenAI misuse?	AI struggles to generate content requiring critical thinking and problem solving that involves analysing information, drawing connections, evaluating arguments, or proposing solutions. Assignments that require articulation of nuanced relationships between ideas can be effective because GenAI outputs on comparison and contrast are often superficial currently.
16. Wouldn’t it be easier for assessment conditions to simply prohibit any GenAI use?	Any use of GenAI that leads to a student submitting evidence that is not their own for assessment against the standard is already prohibited. Limited use of AI or GenAI may be appropriate in the context of some Achievement Standards, depending on what is being assessed. It is important to teach students to understand when GenAI usage is appropriate.
17. What further assessment design strategies might be helpful to prevent GenAI misuse?	Transparency of work discourages GenAI misuse. For example, incorporating a peer evaluation component to assessment design can be a beneficial strategy. Students are less likely to participate in academic dishonesty when assessing a peer’s work. ¹ (Charles Sturt University, 2024)

¹ Charles Sturt University. (n.d.). Rethinking assessment strategies in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). Retrieved July 5, 2024, from <https://www.csu.edu.au/division/learning-teaching/assessments/assessment-and-artificial-intelligence/rethinking-assessments>

Question	Response
NCEA Assessment Practice	
18. What constitutes GenAI misuse in NCEA assessment?	Any evidence submitted for assessment against an Achievement Standard must be the student's own work. Students are expected to demonstrate their own knowledge, understanding, and skills. Students must be able to demonstrate that their final submission is their own work. Failing to acknowledge use of GenAI when it has been used also constitutes AI misuse.
19. What measures might teachers take before and during assessment to mitigate GenAI misuse before submission?	The most effective GenAI misuse mitigation comes from the teacher knowing their students and knowing their work. Any of the following mitigations could be used, depending on the subject, Achievement Standard and assessment activity. › Show students examples of inaccuracy, bias, logical, and stylistic problems to deter GenAI use in assessment. › Check Conditions of Assessment for the specific Achievement Standard. › Let students know that detectors for identifying AI generated text exist and are improving. › Remind students of the school's policy on academic integrity, how it relates to the school's values, and what plagiarism and cheating mean. › Cover what is (if any) and is not acceptable use of AI and GenAI before students begin the assessment activity. This could use agreed school/departmental wording and should be specific to the Achievement Standard. › Provide guidance on how to acknowledge use of GenAI (see questions 10 and 11). › Have regular check-ins and/or formal checkpoints with students and their work. › Check drafts in the document's version history docs at different points in the assessment process. › Use verbal questioning to check understanding – this can be quick, informal, regular, and/or more extensive and formally scheduled. › If appropriate, allocate classroom time for completion of some or all of the assessment activity. › Always ask students to affirm that their submissions are their own work. A declaration form / authenticity statement is often a good way to do this. › Teacher verification of the authenticity of the students' work.
20. What responsibilities do teachers or assessors have with regard to authenticity of submitted work?	The most effective GenAI misuse mitigation comes from the teacher knowing their students and knowing their work. Teachers or assessors have a responsibility to verify that work submitted for assessment has been produced by the student. The teacher or assessor must therefore be able to assure authenticity by verifying that the evidence of achievement is the student's own.

Question	Response

Authenticity, GenAI Detection, and Resubmissions

21. How can you tell if a student is using GenAI while completing their assessment?

The most effective detection of authenticity breaches in NCEA assessment comes from the teacher knowing their students and knowing their work. Indicators of GenAI misuse include:

- › Different writing style, tone, or vocabulary than in the student’s previous work.
- › Change of tone or voice within the assessment.
- › Use of American spellings, e.g. utilized, honor.
- › Use of vocabulary higher than the assessment level or different to that used for activities in the classroom.
- › Use or predictable GenAI writing, layout, and structures such as
 - excessive use of commas
 - use of bullet points followed by bold titles and one to two sentences of explanation.
- › A sudden dump of information into the document, seen through version history.
- › Lack of references or not stating how information was sourced.
- › Lack of evidence or explanation of a concept, idea, or decision. There is an onus on students to show reasoning.
- › References that do not exist.
- › Information that is not real (hallucinations).

22. Is it worth using an AI detector?

AI detection software should not be relied upon to ensure authenticity. AI detectors can sometimes identify whether a student has included AI generated content in their assessment and can function as a deterrent. However, they are susceptible to returning ‘false positive’ results. They are therefore unsuitable to use as the sole means of ensuring authenticity in NCEA assessments. Detection software is a single tool in a kete of tools and strategies (see 19, 21). The most effective detection of authenticity breaches in NCEA assessment comes from the teacher knowing their students and knowing their work. Teachers know their students and are best equipped to ensure the authenticity of submitted work, with AI detection tools potentially being used as one tool in that process.

Detection tools should be part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring authenticity that includes:

- › Clear school policy.
- › Education of students about academic integrity and GenAI.
- › Thoughtful assessment design.
- › Consistent teacher practice.

Question	Response
23. What are some recommended approaches to take if you suspect the use of GenAI in a submitted assessment?	A common process for schools and teachers to follow is recommended and should be described in the school's assessment policy. This process should follow the principles of natural justice when investigating – use evidence, fair explanation, and reasonable timeframes, with the right of appeal. For suspected GenAI breaches, this could include: › Checking versioning in the document to see if large amounts of information have been added in one go › Interviewing the student, focusing on key sections, concepts, or vocabulary to check student understanding of their submitted work.
24. If a student has used GenAI in a section of their assessment, do they receive Not Achieved for the whole assessment or just no marks for the section/question it was used in?	Suspected breaches of academic integrity must follow a process determined by the school's assessment policy. If any evidence submitted for an NCEA assessment is found not to have been the student's own work, then it is not valid, and the student must receive a Not Achieved grade.
25. What about GenAI use with regards to resubmission and further assessment opportunities?	Students cannot be offered a resubmission opportunity if their work has been found to be inauthentic, as resubmission can only be used to confirm a grade on the Not Achieved / Achieved grade boundary, not to rewrite evidence. A further assessment opportunity may be offered to students after further teaching and learning has taken place, if it is offered to all students. This includes those who may have been found to have submitted inauthentic work in the first opportunity.